



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIVISION

MINUTES – Approved
September 18, 2025



Salud Mental y
Tratamiento del Uso
de Sustancias

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

AUGUST 21, 2025, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY, 1400 EMELINE, ROOMS 206-207, SANTA CRUZ 95060
MICROSOFT TEAMS (831) 454-2222, CONFERENCE ID 703 401 277#

Present: Antonio Rivas, Dean, Kashino, Hugh McCormick, Jeffrey Arlt, Kaelin Wagnermarsh,
Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Kimberly De Serpa
Absent: Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Rachel Montoya
Staff: Marni Sandoval, Amy Rhoades, Jane Batoon-Kurovski

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- I. Roll Call – Quorum present. Meeting called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Chair Xaloc Cabanes.
 - II. Public Comment – None
 - III. Board Member Announcements
 1. Youth Crisis Stabilization Center – Ribbon Cutting on 9/17/25 at 10am.
 2. 2025 Data Notebook topic is Wellness Centers. Report due to the state on 11/01/25.
 3. Xaloc and other chairpersons presented at the Youth Leadership Council. Several youth expressed interest in learning more about BHAB.
 4. New Behavioral Health Staff – Amy Rhoades, BHSA Coordinator
 5. Natalie – youth representative for Youth Led Leadership Alliance
 - IV. Approve July 17, 2025 Minutes
Motion / Second: Antonio Rivas / Michael Neidig
Ayes: Rivas, Kashino, McCormick, Arlt, Wagnermarsh, Neidig, Webb, Cabanes, De Serpa
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Result: Approved
 - V. Secretary’s Report
 - No attendance issues, no overdue Ethics training.
 - September 8th is 988 day. September is Suicide Prevention month.
 - Quarterly CalBHBC training on October 17-18 in Burlingame and on Zoom
 - Crisis Jam on Youtube every Wednesday, 9am-10am
 - Connections is doing a webinar on the cost of behavioral health
 - National Council on Mental Well Being has a webinar on creating a trauma informed and recovery-oriented system of care
 - VI. Patient’s Rights Report – George Carvalho, Advocate
July report was provided. George did not attend the meeting.
 - VII. Board of Supervisors Report – Supervisor Kimberly De Serpa
 - New leadership in BH. Deputy Director of BH to be announced soon. New HSA Department Director Connie Moreno-Peraza, LCSW starting on August 29, 2025
 - Search of new CEO – distributed survey for community input and stakeholder group being formed.
 - Managed to find some money for MHCAN thanks to BHAB advocacy.
 - VIII. Behavioral Health Director’s Report – Dr. Marni Sandoval, BH Deputy Director

- HSA Director Connie Moreno-Peraza from Ventura County starting on August 29th.
- Santa Cruz County BH got accepted into the CA Medi-Cal Mobile Crisis Continuum Policy Academy (MTAC). MTAC is the policy academy bringing together 8 counties in BH and their partners to work together with national and state subject matter experts to make sure that the mobile crisis continuum of care is examined to figure out the local gaps and how existing resources can be utilized. Project started in August and expected to end Spring 2026.
- Adult Mental Health Highlights
 1. Care Team - program received 16 petitions, resulting in 10 participants (3 now have Care agreements, 7 are in the initiation period). Four Care participants have been housed with Housing Matters and one at Jesse Street. A Mental Health Client Specialist was hired to be the lead on the Care team to provide more support as the petitions continue to come in.
 2. IHART - program is in partnership with Front Street peers, building a strong collaboration to get many people housed and making progress with their recovery.
 3. Wrapped up the FY24-25 internship program with 9 interns successfully completed the program. Eleven interns will be joining for current internship, seven of those interns are existing BH employees who are pursuing higher education.
- SUDS Highlights
 1. Launched Prop 47 Cohort IV services. Awarded \$8M in the fall of 2024 and the funding period will go through the fall of 2028. Funds will be used to support the expansion of recovery residences for justice involved individuals. Both outpatient and intensive outpatient care are included as well as a wraparound service and care coordination support. Janus will provide services in September 2025 and Encompass will provide services in October 2025.
- Children's Mental Health Highlight - Children's Youth Crisis Center
Contracting with Aspiranet to run the Crisis Stabilization Unit and the Crisis Residential Program. The ribbon cutting event will include a short program followed by tours of the facility on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 10am-12pm.

IX. Site Visit Ad Hoc Committee Update - Kaelin Wagnermarsh

- Jail Site Visit scheduled for September 3rd at 1pm.
- 7th Avenue Site Visit - October date to be determined

X. Review and discussion of Mike Beebe's Report

- Goal and objectives-1) identify new revenue sources for the county 2) identify savings from current systems 3) identify capacity building for cost effective treatment.
- Summary of Beebe presentation
 - Looking at renegotiating current County Medi-Cal reimbursement status, increased percentage of property tax received without impacting other organizations.
 - Focus on high-cost beneficiaries and increase their resilience to reduce costs.
 - Review Telecare average treatment time to ensure increased utilization and reduce transfers out of county
 - Increase use of step down in outpatient to increase coverage at a lower cost; address what is needed in county acute beds and jail mental health needs.
 - Looking at partnering with private insurance companies to create facilities used for Medi-Cal and receive financial support for capacity growth from the cities of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Capitola and Scotts Valley.

- Important to identify stakeholders and to campaign specifically about prop 13 and other items.
- XI. BHSA Community Program Planning Process – Dr. Marni Sandoval and Amy Rhoades
- A. BHSA Key Points
1. Counties will receive the majority of BHSA funds for local services
 2. Focus will be on who needs the most help
 3. More collaborative approach in plan development and services provided
 4. Transparency- goals will be tracked and annual reports will reflect outcomes and progress made
 5. At least 30% of funds will now go toward housing interventions
- B. New County Requirements Under BHSA
1. Engagement with the local health as well as the local managed care plans as part of the community process.
 2. Monitoring and oversight – increased reporting from collaborative systems within the county including our local health jurisdictions and the managed care plans.
 3. Community Program Planning Process and engagement is very significant.
 4. Integrated plan covers all behavioral health services not just those funded by BHSA.
 5. Public Comment period for the integrated plan must be done 30 days before the draft is submitted on March 31, 2026.
- C. Community Program Planning Process (CPPP)
- Important to include CEO's and FBO's and other government entities. Will also be working with Public Health and the managed care plans.
 - The data will be assessed internally where themes, goals and priorities will be identified based on the information gathered and will be used to write the Integrated (3-year) Plan that will go into effect July 2026.
 - Consultant will coordinate activities such as town halls, surveys with the community, focus groups.
- D. Community Planning Process will drive the Integrated Plan (IP)
- a. Counties will create one large integrated plan to include goals and strategies for July 2026–June 2029.
 - b. Plans will include all funding streams for behavioral health services and programs.
 - c. The IP will be updated annually within the 3-year period.
- E. Timeline for CPP and Integrated Plan
- a. Currently collecting quotes from consultants to help lead the process
 - b. Goal is to complete the community engagement process before December
 - c. Integrated Plan is open for public comments for 30 days starting in February
 - d. Draft Plan is finalized and submitted in March. Final Plan will be submitted in June, which goes into effect July 2026.
- F. Call to Action
- a. Spread community awareness about this process
 - b. Share existing community gatherings with BHS
 - c. BHAB can participate in focus groups and/or surveys
 - d. Help get the community involved
- XII. Future Agenda Items
- Ad Hoc Committee – BHSA to support CPPP process until March. Committee members: Jeffrey, Valerie, Antonio, Xaloc
- XIII. Adjournment
- Meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.